

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) In a method of playing a conventional or variant game of blackjack between a dealer and a player where the player is dealt two initial cards and the dealer is dealt a single initial card (the “three initial cards”), an improvement comprising the steps of:

- (a) allowing the player to place a side bet for a blackjack game;
- (b) paying or collecting the side bet in accordance with a pre-established set of rules ~~which cover all possible combinations of the three initial cards~~;
- (c) and wherein the pre-established set of rules provides a winning side bet for the player where the sum of the three initial cards is greater than or equal to 19, but not greater than 21.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the game is played with at least three decks and wherein the pre-established set of rules provides a winning side bet for the player in one or more of the following circumstances

- (a) the three initial cards are sequential and of the same suit; and
- (b) the three initial cards are the same card and of the same suit.

Claim 4 (previously presented) The method of claim 3 wherein the only winning circumstance where the three initial cards are sequential are if the cards are 6, 7 and 8.

Claim 5 (previously presented) The method of claim 3 or 4 wherein the only winning circumstance where the three initial cards are the same are if the cards are all 7.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (canceled)

Claim 9 (new) A method to player a side bet for a blackjack game, the method comprising:

- allowing the player to place a blackjack hand bet and a simultaneous side bet;
- dealing two cards to a player and a third card to form a three card hand; and
- resolving the side bet based on the three card hand, wherein

- if the three card hand is comprised of three suited sevens, then the player wins a payout of a first amount;

- if the three card hand is comprised of three sevens of any suit, then the player wins a payout of a second amount;

- if the three card hand is comprised of a suited 6-7-8 then the player wins a payout of a third amount;

- if the three card hand is comprised of a 6-7-8 of any suit then the player wins a payout of a fourth amount;

- if the three hand is comprised of cards which total 19-21 then the player wins a payout.

Claim 10 (new) A method as recited in claim 9, wherein the first amount is higher than the second amount.

Claim 11 (new) A method as recited in claim 9, wherein the third amount is higher than the fourth amount.

Claim 12 (new) A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the third amount is higher than the fourth amount.

Claim 13 (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the first amount is greater than the third amount.

Claim 14 (new) A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the second amount is greater than the fourth amount.

Claim 15 (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein if the three card hand is comprised of cards which total 19-21, then the payout the player wins is less than the first amount and less than the second amount and less than the third amount and less than the fourth amount.

Claim 16 (new) A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the three card hand is paid according to the following payable:

| Player's Hand | Payoff |
|----------------|--------|
| Suited 7-7-7 | 200-1 |
| Suited 6-7-8 | 100-1 |
| Any Suit 7-7-7 | 50-1 |
| Any Suit 6-7-8 | 30-1 |
| Suited 21 | 15-1 |
| 21 | 3-1 |
| 20 | 2-1 |
| 19 | 2-1 |
| All Others | Loss |

Claim 17 (new) A method as recited in claim 13, wherein the three card hand is paid according to the following paytable:

| Player's Hand | Payoff |
|----------------|--------|
| Suited 7-7-7 | 500-1 |
| Suited 6-7-8 | 150-1 |
| Any Suit 7-7-7 | 100-1 |
| Any Suit 6-7-8 | 30-1 |
| Suited 21 | 20-1 |
| 21 | 2-1 |
| 20 | 2-1 |
| 19 | 2-1 |
| All Others | Loss |